

Firestarter 5

Scripture: John 3:22-36

Before you read

1. Gather a pen, paper, and highlighters (for marking in your Bible) if you don't want to mark your Bible. Print off this sheet and mark it here.
2. Pray, asking God for wisdom and understanding of the word you are about to read.
3. Read the section more than one time.
 - First, read to understand
 - Second, read to notice
 - Third, read for questions. Record your questions as you read and see if you can answer them. Then Choose 3 questions from the observation section and find their answers.
 - Fourth, mark all the words that refer to family relationships (i.e., father, son, and brother).

READ: John 3:22-36

OBSERVATION:

In what ways is John the Baptist's attitude toward Jesus an example for all followers of Jesus?

What does it mean to have the "Spirit without limit"? (See 3:34 note.)

How was that evident in Jesus' life?

What does it mean that God the Father placed everything in His Son's hands?

Why does verse 36 use the word "believe" for those who have eternal life but the word "obey" for those under judgment?

APPLICATION:

Most people try to get more out of life by investing more in themselves. Self-esteem, self-improvement, self-awareness, and self-confidence are well-intended concepts, but too much of an inward focus, and a person quickly becomes self-centered. We should strive to do and be our best, but that's only possible when we focus less on ourselves and more on Jesus. It may not make sense to culture, but with God, less is more. When our lives become less about us and more about Jesus, we become what we are created to be.

Looking at your own life, where should Jesus become greater and you become less (v. 30)?

How do people refuse to accept Jesus' testimony (v. 32, also see 3:36 note), and why?

What specific area of life do you need to submit to Jesus and obey Him more fully?

What actions can you take to ensure this?

Action Step: Ask God to expose an area or two in your life where there is too much of yourself and not enough of Him. Perhaps you are already well aware of these areas and tendencies. Take deliberate steps to humble yourself and submit to God's guidance and control in these areas. Find ways to draw attention away from yourself and your desires and plans, and instead, bring honor and positive attention to God.

PRAY:

Ask Jesus to help you focus less on yourself so that He will show through you in significant ways. Praise Jesus for His authority over all things. Pray that you will always remain submissive to God and obedient to His Word.